

**Literature, Geography,  
and the Postmodern  
Poetics of Place**

*This page intentionally left blank*

**Literature, Geography,  
and the Postmodern  
Poetics of Place**

Eric Prieto

palgrave  
macmillan



LITERATURE, GEOGRAPHY, AND THE POSTMODERN POETICS OF PLACE  
Copyright © Eric Prieto, 2012

Softcover reprint of the hardcover 1st edition 2012 978-1-137-03111-2  
All rights reserved.

First published in 2021 by PALGRAVE MACMILLAN® in the United States—a division of St. Martin's Press LLC, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010.

Where this book is distributed in the UK, Europe and the rest of the world, this is by Palgrave Macmillan, a division of Macmillan Publishers Limited, registered in England, company number 785998, of Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS.

Palgrave Macmillan is the global academic imprint of the above companies and has companies and representatives throughout the world.

Palgrave® and Macmillan® are registered trademarks in the United States, the United Kingdom, Europe and other countries.

ISBN 978-1-349-44070-2 ISBN 978-1-137-31801-5 (eBook)

DOI 10.1057/9781137318015

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Prieto, Eric, 1966–

Literature, geography, and the postmodern poetics of place / Eric Prieto.  
p. cm.

1. Place (Philosophy) in literature. 2. Literature—20th century—History and criticism. 3. Literature—21st century—History and criticism. 4. Liminality in literature. 5. Postmodernism (Literature) I. Title.

PN56.P49P75 2013  
809:93358—dc23 2012031254

A catalogue record of the book is available from the British Library.

Design by Scribe Inc.

First edition: December 2012

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

*This page intentionally left blank*

For Kim, Sofie, and Charlie

# Contents

Acknowledgments	ix
Acknowledgment of Previous Publications	xi
Introduction	1
<b>Part I Phenomenological Place</b>	
1 Place, Subjectivity, and the Humanist Tradition	17
2 Samuel Beckett and the Postmodern Loss of Place	37
<b>Part II The Social Production of Place</b>	
3 Poststructuralism and the Resistance to Place	75
4 <i>Beur</i> Fiction and the <i>Banlieue</i> Crisis	107
<b>Part III Postcolonial Place</b>	
5 Place after Postcolonial Studies	139
6 Evolution in/of the Caribbean Landscape Narrative	153
Conclusion: Landscape, Map, and Vertical Integration	187
Notes	201
Works Cited	213
Index	225

*This page intentionally left blank*



# Acknowledgments

The origins of this book go back a long way. I have, for as long as I can remember, had a particular fascination with transitional neighborhoods and in-between places of various kinds. And for most of my adult life I have, through an inextricable mix of necessity, preference, and good luck, lived and worked in neighborhoods (Fort Green, Shepherd's Bush, Créteil, Belleville, and Schoelcher) that enabled me to partake in the life of some of the world's great cities while also discovering the particularities that give life on the margins its distinctive flavor. I would like to thank all the friends met along the way who helped me to get to know and love these places. I would also like to thank all the friends and colleagues who helped me to develop and test the ideas put forth in this book. My UC Santa Barbara colleagues Porter Abbott, Peter Bloom, Catherine Nesci, and Sydney Lévy were particularly generous with their time and advice, reading early drafts of the manuscript and helping me to strengthen the book considerably. Other colleagues have also been generous in exchanging ideas with me at various stages in the genesis of this project: Alec Hargreaves, Martin Munro, Nick Nesbitt, Rob Tally, Richard Watts, Bertrand Westphal, and many others. The students in my "Space and Place" seminars challenged me to open up new and unforeseen windows onto the subject—as did the doctoral research of Claudio dell'Oca and Lachelle Hannickel. I am grateful to the University of California at Santa Barbara for facilitating my research in various ways: notably through a Regents' Humanities Faculty Fellowship, a travel grant from the Interdisciplinary Humanities Center, and a Faculty Career Development Award. And I'm thankful above all for my wife and family, who do indeed make our house a home.

*This page intentionally left blank*

# Acknowledgment of Previous Publications

Portions of chapter 6 were published in “Landscaping Identity in Contemporary Caribbean Literature,” in *Francophone Post-Colonial Cultures: Critical Essays*, ed. Kamal Salhi (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2003), 141–52, and in “Edouard Glissant, *Littérature-monde*, and *Tout-monde*,” *Small Axe* 14, no.3 33 (2010): 111–20. They are reprinted by permission.

Excerpts from “These Also Once Under Moonlight” are used by kind permission of Jane Hirshfield. This poem was published in Hirshfield’s *Come, Thief* (New York: Knopf, 2011) and also appeared in *The American Poetry Review* 38, no. 5 (September–October 2009): 38.